



Spa 2255

Introduction to Latin
American Cultures

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Required material:

Texts:

Buffington, Robert, and Lila Caimari. *Keen's Latin American Civilization*. 9th ed. Westview P, 2008.
(Available on *Kindle* or *Sony Reader*)

Other:

A notebook

Suggested Material:

Texts:

Williamson, Edwin. *The Penguin History of Latin America*. Penguin (Non-Classics), 1993.

Association, Modern Language. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing, 3rd Edition*.
3rd ed. Modern Language Association of America, 2008.

Overview of course:

This course exposes students to the major cultural transformations that have shaped the development of many of the Latin American civilizations from the pre-Columbian period to the present. During this course students will study the cultural transformations that form the backdrop of many of today's Latin America societies. They will read, reflect upon, and discuss a selection of texts in translation and videos that were either written in Spanish during a crucial moment of cultural transformation or that help recreate/understand such a moment. Course topics include Ancient Americas, the Conquest, the Colonial World, the creation of the Nation State, Globalization, and Intervention and Diaspora. Upon completion of this course, students will have achieved a better understanding of the cultural and historical roots common to many cultures in Latin America.

Course Goals:

- 1) Memorize and make use of important chronologies, geographies, and terminology related to Latin American culture/s.
- 2) Develop a basic diachronic framework for the four main Latin American cultural zones.
- 3) Read and discuss a series of texts in translation that speak of individual and community experiences during key cultural moments that have shaped Latin American history.

- 4) Think critically and imaginatively about a number of crucial cultural issues relevant to Latin American studies.
- 5) Form questions of cultural discovery related to Latin America and develop a research paper based on one.

Evaluation:

Performance Description	Grade	Percentage	System of Evaluation: Midterm.....25% Research Paper Preliminary Bibliography.....5% Annotated Bibliography5% Final Draft.....15% Interpretative Essays.....10% Class Participation Journal and In Class Activities.....15% Final Exam.....25%
Excellent	A	93 > 100 %	
	A-	90 > 92 %	
Good	B+	87 > 89 %	
	B	83 > 86 %	
	B-	80 > 82 %	
Satisfactory	C+	77 > 79 %	
	C	73 > 76 %	
	C-	70 > 72 %	
Marginal	D+	67 > 69 %	
	D	63 > 66 %	
Failing	D-	60 > 62 %	
	F	0 > 59 %	

Important Dates	
Journal 1 – Sept. 17 th , 2010	Inter. Essay 1 – Sept. 27 th , 2010
Journal 2 – Oct. 1 st , 2010	Midterm – Oct. 15 th , 2010
Prelim. Bib – Oct. 22 nd , 2010	Journal 3 – Nov. 5 th , 2010
Inter. Essay 2 – Nov. 8 th , 2010	Annot. Bib. – Nov. 12 th , 2010
Journal 4 – Nov. 24 th , 2010	1 st Draft -- Nov. 24 th , 2010
Final Exam – Dec. 13 th , 2010	Final Draft -- Dec. 13 th , 2010

Performance:

General Course Expectations: Students should attend every class, prepare their homework assignments, and maintain a class journal (containing notes taken both in the classroom and during assigned readings, or research). Active class engagement will be one of our class priorities, so students should not only come prepared daily, but also expect to periodically work in groups and make informal in-class presentations.

Electronic Journal: Electronic journal entries will be kept daily and should reflect work done both during and after class. They should include academic, emotional, creative, and intellectual comments. In the electronic journal, students should prepare comments and notes on the assigned readings, commentary and reflection that will be used later in class discussions or in preparation for an exam. Daily electronic journal entries should summarize the notes that each student takes during class and while reading at home. The suggested format is the Modified Cornell Method (<http://faculty.mnsfld.edu/wkeeth/Modified%20Cornell%20Method.pdf>). Electronic journals will be turned in periodically by email.

Midterm and Final Exams: These are comprehensive and accumulative written examinations that assess student retention and comprehension of the materials discussed in class and assigned readings. They usually consist of recognition, map identification, multiple choice, and short essay exercises. Neither the Midterm nor the Final Exam can be made up.

Interpretative Essays: During the semester, each student will write two interpretative essays that should focus on a cultural concept and/or transformation covered in the course. In each essay, students will demonstrate a creative and analytical application of the major concepts covered in the course. The interpretative essays must be typed in Times New Roman 12 and should include bibliographical citations as needed. Students must follow the MLA format guidelines for their citations. Each essay should be at least 2 pages in length. Late papers will not be accepted.

Research paper: The format of this 5-7-page document must follow MLA guidelines for research papers. This Research essay will be completed and evaluated in a staged process (Preliminary bibliography, Annotated Bibliography, Final Draft, and Oral presentation). More detailed information regarding its content, method of evaluation, and purpose will be presented in class.

Class Participation: All students are expected to attend and participate in every class. Any absence will result in a 15% reduction in the student's Participation grade. Students, however, may request permission to miss a class and arrange to make-up missed work prior to their absence. This type of arrangement will waive the 15% attendance reduction, but must be completed at least 24 hours prior to an absence or illness. Missing a class does not release a student from any class obligations. Electronic submission of written work is an effective way of handing in required written work by a specified deadline, especially when a student expects to be absent.

The Syllabus: This syllabus serves as a contractual agreement. Presence in this class means that you agree to the items stipulated in the syllabus and are aware of any modifications made throughout the semester. One should periodically check the course web site for any updates to the syllabus and/or class calendar.

Class records and Grades: Oversee your grade by monitoring your progress and maintaining contact with your instructor. Any student material or record that has been returned to the student becomes the student's responsibility to maintain as a permanent record for the course. Students are responsible for picking up any materials that are made available to them or are returned in class. If a student loses these records and the professor does not have a copy of the material available, the student will receive a failing grade for the particular activity.

Students with "exceptionalities": Any students with documented psychological or learning disorders or other significant medical conditions that may affect their learning should contact Mr. William Chabala in our [Counseling Center](#) (143 South Hall, Phone: 662-4695; mwchabala@mansfield.edu). Mr. Chabala will provide the professor with the appropriate letter and materials that will enable him to serve each student's particular needs more effectively. If a student has an exceptionality that requires class or testing accommodations, Mr. Chabala will work with the student and the professor to identify and implement appropriate interventions.